

Echo

COMMENT

Welcome to Pitsea Dales

PITSEA didn't get its name for nothing. It has been the main dump for London's waste for over a century.

Now, though, Pitsea is entering a brave new world as flagship for a whole range of environmental good causes, including clean energy, recycling, and landscape regeneration.

This week, Pitsea launched its pioneering scheme to create electricity from waste. All that metropolitan muck hauled down the Thames will at last be put to good account.

It comes as no surprise to learn that Pitsea will receive the waste soil from the Olympics scheme. Yet even this is being turned to advantage, to turn the old tip-site in an area of artificial green hills.

This highly encouraging process turns the old Yorkshire motto on its head. Now, where there's muck there's grass.

What's more, it soon won't be the Yorkshire Dales that tourists want to visit, but the new Pitsea ones.

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■ **CARL EVE** joins Essex Police traffic unit as the force begins its annual drink-drive ca

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Campaigners hit out at 'scaremongering'

TRAVELLERS today attacked the growing campaign against creating a huge legal site at Pitsea as "hysterical scaremongering".

Joe Jones, of the Gypsy and Traveller Law reform Coalition, spoke out over the proposals, which involve travellers moving from Crays Hill to Terminus Drive, Pitsea.

Mr Jones, who once stayed on a managed site at Pitsea, said: "It is a knee-jerk reaction and just a cheap way of gaining votes. But talk like this is scaremongering and increases anti-gypsy hysteria."

"It is not even a real offer because no one has approached the travellers, but there is this much opposition." Groups

including the coalition and Government White Papers have recommended sites of no more than 18 plots, but Mr Jones denied the proposed 45-pitch site between the A13 and c2c railway line was too large.

He added: "It is now being accepted that Irish traveller communities, like Dale Farm, need larger sites. They live in much bigger extended family communities than English travellers who prefer living with immediate families."

Dale Farm spokesman Richard Sheridan said Basildon Council still had a duty to provide sites because most of its 104 legal pitches were private sites provided by travellers.